



# Arizona Criminal Justice Commission

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VACANT  
County Attorney

VACANT  
Former Judge

VACANT  
County Sheriff

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## **NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK**

*"Support Victims. Build Trust. Engage Communities."*

### ***Arizona Criminal Justice Commission Provides Resources for Victims' of Crime***

**Phoenix, AZ, Monday, April 19, 2021** – Today, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) commemorates National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 18–24, 2021, and this year's theme of "Support Victims. Build Trust. Engage Communities." The statewide event will be held virtually on Monday, April 19th where participants will hear from keynote speaker Paul Cassell, Ronald N. Boyce Presidential Professor of Criminal Law and Distinguished University Professor of Law at the S.J. Quinney College of Law at the University of Utah, and honor those victim services professionals all across the state that work tirelessly on behalf of crime victims.

As one of Arizona's largest funders of victims' services each year, ACJC places great focus on seeking legislative changes that advocate for victims' rights, provide additional resources, and improve accessibility to victims' services and programs.

"Every year the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission looks for better ways to assist our survivors of crime in the state by providing greater resources, increased protections and better accessibility to systems. Even over this past year with victims' services financial resources dwindling, ACJC is still working to find funds and resources for victims." stated Sheila Polk, Yavapai County Attorney and Commission Chair.

The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission oversees and administers two key programs to assist victims: Arizona's Crime Victim Compensation and Crime Victim Assistance programs. The Crime Victim Assistance program provides grants to private non-profit or government agencies that deliver direct services to crime victims. In FY2020, ACJC awarded \$750,000 in grant dollars to fund projects for 27 agencies. Funded programs reported serving over 19,000 victims and provided over 349,000 services for victims of crime. The Crime Victim Compensation program provides financial assistance to victims who have experienced a financial loss as a direct result of a crime. In FY2020, the Victim Compensation Program provided program assistance to 1,768 victims and 2,502 individuals (relatives and/or associated individuals). For FY2021, the program has been allocated approximately \$3.5M from both state and federal funds to assist victims statewide.

Over the past five years, ACJC has spearheaded the following legislative and programmatic changes that benefit victims of crime in Arizona:

*Our mission is to continuously address, improve, sustain and enhance public safety in the State of Arizona through the coordination, cohesiveness, and effectiveness of the Criminal Justice System*

- 2015 – Passed Senate Bill 1295, which closed a gap in missing fingerprints by those who committed a crime to ensure that an accurate criminal history is created in the state system (increased protections for sensitive populations in Arizona that require a criminal history background check for workers).
- 2017 – Passed House Bill 2375, which created a stay of debt collection process for individuals participating in the victim compensation program and required health care providers who accepted payment as payment in full for their services (added significant financial protections for crime victims).
- 2018 – Passed House Bill 2249, which oversaw the first comprehensive re-write of Arizona’s orders of protection/injunction against harassment process in over 25 years (modernizes and provides easier access to individuals seeking protection from the courts and increases the likelihood that orders and injunctions will be served and enforceable).
- 2019 – Worked with State Senators Victoria Steele (D) and Eddie Farnsworth (R) to pass Senate Bill 1250 that will close a significant gap in the injunctions against harassment process for victims of sexual assault.
- 2020- ACJC in partnership with the AOC launched the AZPOINT online Orders of Protection/Injunction Against Harassment portal that allows victims of crime greater expediency and responsiveness in their time of need.

“These are just a few efforts ACJC is undertaking on behalf of crime victims, but we know can do better!” said Andrew T. LeFevre, Executive Director of ACJC. “As we honor victims and their rights this week, let us remember these victims year round and continue to fight the good fight everyday.”

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*Created in 1982, the Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) is a statutorily authorized entity mandated to carry out various coordinating, monitoring and reporting functions regarding the administration and management of criminal justice programs in Arizona. The ACJC serves as a resource and service organization for Arizona’s criminal justice community on a myriad of issues ranging from drugs, gangs and victim assistance to criminal history and crime laboratory enhancements.*